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New York

President:	Mr. Trump/Mrs. Haley	(United States of America)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Morales Ayma
	China	Mr. Wang Yi
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Kablan Duncan
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo
	Ethiopia	Mr. Negewo
	France	Mr. Macron
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Abdrakhmanov
	Kuwait	Mr. Al Sabah
	Netherlands	Mr. Rutte
	Peru	Mr. Vizcarra Cornejo
	Poland	Mr. Duda
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Ms. Wallström
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mrs. May

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The President: I am honoured to be here today to preside over this meeting of the Security Council. It is also my privilege to welcome the Heads of State and Government, Ministers and other leaders and representatives here with us in the Chamber. I also wish to warmly welcome Secretary-General António Guterres and thank him for joining us.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the President of the United States of America.

It is a great honour to be here today at this Security Council meeting to discuss a matter of urgent importance concerning countering the proliferation of deadly chemical, biological and nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. The nations of the world have long recognized that certain weapons are so dangerous and can inflict so much suffering that all of us have a vital interest in preventing their further development, spread and use.

Since my inauguration, the United States has taken bold action to confront such sinister threats. Many of us are rightly focused on the dangers of nuclear weapons, but we must never forget the risk posed by biological and chemical weapons. The United States was one of the first nations to unilaterally renounce the use of biological weapons and, since the First World War, we have led international efforts against the scourge of chemical warfare.

Most recently, in Syria we have twice imposed severe consequences on the Al-Assad regime for using chemical weapons against innocent civilians. I want to thank Prime Minister May and President Macron for their countries' close partnership in those efforts in April. The Syrian regime's butchery is enabled by Russia and Iran. The Iranian regime exports violence, terror and turmoil. It illicitly procured sensitive items to advance its ballistic missile programme and proliferates those missiles all across the Middle East. The regime is the world's leading sponsor of terror and fuels conflict across the region and far beyond. A regime with that track record must never be allowed to possess a nuclear weapon.

For that reason, I announced earlier this year that the United States would withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal. That horrible, one-sided deal allowed Iran to continue its path towards a bomb and gave the regime a cash lifeline when they needed it the most. They were in big trouble. They needed cash, and we gave it to them. In the years since the deal was signed, Iran's aggression only increased. The regime used new funds from the deal to support terrorism, build nuclear-capable missiles and foment chaos.

Following America's withdrawal, the United States began reimposing nuclear-related sanctions on Iran. All United States nuclear-related sanctions will be in full force by early November. They will be in full force. After that, the United States will pursue additional sanctions — tougher than ever before — to counter the entire range of Iran's malign conduct. Any individual or entity who fails to comply with those sanctions will face severe consequences. I ask all members of the Security Council to work with the United States to ensure that the Iranian regime changes its behaviour and never acquires a nuclear bomb.

With all of that said, I want to thank Iran, Russia and Syria, for — at my very strong urging and request — they have substantially slowed down their attack on the governorate of Idlib and the 3 million people who live there, in order to get 25,000 targeted terrorists. Get the terrorists; but I hope the restraint continues after they get the terrorists. The world is watching. I would also like to thank Turkey for helping to negotiate restraint. Anything the United States of America can do to help resolve this problem in order to save, perhaps, hundreds of thousands of lives — maybe more — we are willing and able. We are available to help.

In my remarks yesterday to the General Assembly, I laid out my Administration's commitment to building a more just and peaceful future (see A/73/PV.6). Regrettably, we found that China has been attempting to interfere in our upcoming 2018 elections, to be held in November, against my Administration. They do not want me, or us, to win because I am the first President ever to challenge China on trade, and we are winning on trade. We are winning at every level. We do not want them to meddle or interfere in our upcoming elections.

As I also mentioned yesterday, we have seen the results of historic efforts to open new pathways to peace on the Korean peninsula, of which we are extremely proud. I am pleased to say that North Korea has not conducted a missile test since last November. It has not conducted a nuclear test since last September. And the hostages have been returned to us. Very importantly, the remains of American heroes are now returning home.

In June, I held a historic summit with Chairman Kim Jong Un in Singapore, where he reaffirmed his commitment to complete denuclearization. Last week, Chairman Kim reiterated that commitment to President Moon Jae-in at their third summit, and to me in the form of a very strong letter. I think we will make a deal. But, unfortunately, to ensure this progress continues, we must enforce existing Security Council resolutions until denuclearization occurs.

However, we have detected that some nations are already violating those United Nations sanctions. That includes illegal ship-to-ship transfers, which must end immediately. The safety of the Korean peninsula, the region and the world depends on full compliance with Security Council resolutions. That is very important.

Most importantly, however, I believe that Chairman Kim Jong Un, a man I have gotten to know and like, wants peace and prosperity for North Korea. Many things are happening behind the scenes, away from the media, that nobody knows about, but they are happening nevertheless and they are happening in a very positive way. So I think the international community will have some very good news coming from North Korea in the coming months and years.

I also very much appreciate what President Moon of South Korea had to say about me last night in television interviews. Working with President Moon has been my great honour. Likewise, working with President Xi of China and Prime Minister Abe of Japan has been a pleasure and an honour. Each of us follows in the footsteps of countless world leaders, diplomats and public servants who came to the United Nations with the same noble goal: to build a future worthy of the patriots — true patriots — who sacrificed their lives for our nations and for our future. To be successful, we need a commitment of every nation represented in this Chamber. Acting together, we can replace the horrors of war with the blessings of safety and the beautiful promise of peace.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of France, to take the floor.

President Macron (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the United States presidency of the Security Council for convening us today to address the serious threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for being present with us today.

The first question that comes to mind with regard to this issue as I contemplate our differences — speaking frankly — over the past year on such important issues as Iranian nuclear power and the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime, is simply: "What is it that we, the States members of the Security Council, still want to do together?"

The non-proliferation regime, which organizes nuclear weapons control to limit the risk of nuclear war and imposes an absolute ban on certain weapons so that our people will forever be protected from the horror of gas or bacteriological warfare, is a relatively recent construction that reached maturity in the 1990s. It is the result of the tragedies of the twentieth century and the firm determination of our predecessors, their vision of the good of humankind and their spirit of responsibility. That edifice is based on the mutual concessions, interdependencies and mutual trust that we built at that time. In a word, it is based on a multilateral approach to security.

Our responsibility, which I strongly believe in today, is that we owe it to those who came before us and to those for whom we are responsible is to preserve and strengthen that regime at a time when it is being seriously tested. The States members of the Council must set an example in that respect, and, in my view, stand united on this issue even more than on others, .

We have been remarkably united on the issue of North Korea, most recently in December 2017 with resolution 2397 (2017). The management of that crisis, as just recalled by the United States President, is now in a new phase thanks to his initiative to engage in a direct dialogue with the Chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea. France welcomes and supports his efforts, as well as those made by South Korea, which he highlighted.

At no point should the Security Council lose sight of the fact that North Korea continues to pose a nuclear and ballistic threat to the region and the world. France expects the Pyongyang regime to take concrete actions to demonstrate its genuine willingness to engage in a process of dismantling its nuclear and ballistic programme in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. Until those actions have been taken, the dialogue must be accompanied by rigorous implementation of the sanctions decided by the Council. On that issue, we were united.

We were also united on the issue of Iran with resolution 2231 (2015), but that was in 2015. Since then, the trajectories of the signatory States of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have diverged. And yet, I reiterate, I am convinced that everyone at this table still has the same goal of preventing Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and of guaranteeing, through strict international control, the peaceful purpose of its nuclear programme. The JCPOA is imperfect, but it is a decisive step in that direction.

While a serious crisis of confidence was triggered by the reimposition of extraterritorial sanctions by the United States, Tehran continues to honour its nuclear obligations. That situation must be reinforced by compliance with all the provisions of the JCPOA and the resolution that endorses it, and that applies to all Members of the United Nations — not just France, Germany and the United Kingdom.

We must also go beyond the current framework, as I said that here at the United Nations a year ago (see A/72/PV.4). That is why I share the goals that were recalled by the President of the United States, even if we may disagree on the methods with regard to the JCPOA. I believe that, together, we must build a long-term strategy for managing the crisis, which cannot be reduced to a policy of sanctions and containment. The foundations of new negotiations must be based on, first, the framework for Iran's nuclear power beyond 2025-2030, which is an essential complement to what was attained in 2015; secondly, the issue of Iran's increase in the range and accuracy of its missile arsenal and thus the framework of its ballistic activity; and thirdly, on regional stability. All of those issues can be part of useful international action to reduce the regional dangers and achieving the goal we all seek, namely, that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

We were united on the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons with resolution 2118 (2013), but that was in 2013. Since then, threats to the credibility of the prohibition norm have accumulated. The reappearance of chemical weapons during the Syrian regime's offensives, after Damascus had acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and declared its programme, was not met by the necessary resolve by the Council. For its part, Da'esh has used those weapons in Syria and Iraq.

In February 2017, a member of the North Korean ruling family was murdered in Malaysia with the help of a powerful nerve agent, VX. This year, on the territory of the United Kingdom — and thus in the European Union — another nerve agent was used, killing one person and wounding four. France recalls here that it shares the British analysis that there is no plausible explanation other than that Russia is responsible, and it calls on Russia to take all necessary measures to put an end to that threat.

On 23 January 2018, France launched an international partnership against impunity for the use of chemical weapons, which all States are invited to join. It also had to take action against Syrian chemical capabilities, together with the United States and the United Kingdom, and I would like to thank President Trump and Prime Minister May in that regard. France is working to strengthen the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons by setting up a new investigative and attribution mechanism, which is essential.

France will work tirelessly to unite the Council on non-proliferation issues. We must remain united because in recent years, whenever we have been divided, it has been at the expense of our principles and our collective effectiveness. It is a condition of our legitimacy as permanent and non-permanent members. We must be united also because the spread of technology carries the seeds of new threats to peace that directly concern us.

The development of intercontinental missiles by North Korea is a matter of concern. Until now, only a few States had those powerful weapons, which placed a particular responsibility on them. In the future, if sufficient control is not ensured by all and if North Korea proliferates, how many countries will have them?

In the Middle East, ballistic assistance to Hizbullah and the Houthis is a new and worrying development. It must stop before those entities destabilize a tense region even further.

The fight against Da'esh has confirmed the interest of terrorist groups in weapons of mass destruction. The threat of nuclear or radiological terrorism has not disappeared despite the leadership shown by the United States in this area with the Nuclear Security Summits. France calls for continued international cooperation, which is more necessary than ever.

France will continue to strictly respect its commitments under the international non-proliferation regime and to strengthen the various institutions that form its framework. In particular, it will continue to support the efforts of the United Nations and its experts, and will address the challenges of combating nuclear, chemical, biological and ballistic proliferation during its presidency of the Group of Seven in 2019. To that end, I call for unity and a spirit of responsibility because the non-proliferation regime is the backbone of our collective security system. We have built it decade upon decade. It is still young and requires our mobilization, our spirit of responsibility and our unity.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland, to take the floor.

President Duda: The current security situation is not encouraging. Tensions at the global and regional levels threaten the existing international order, including the non-proliferation and arms control regimes. In fact, we have been witnessing their progressive decomposition. They have been regularly challenged by non-State actors, but what is of even greater concern is that they are also being undermined by individual States.

Before I address the problem of nuclear weapons, I would like to first draw attention to another type of weapon of mass destruction that has made its way back to the top of the global agenda. I am referring to chemical weapons. Let me be clear — every use of a chemical weapon is a crime. It does not matter whether it is used on a mass scale by undemocratic regimes against their own people to secure their power or whether it is used in a State-terrorist manner against individuals abroad on whom a certain State wants to take revenge. And if it is a crime, it means that the principal obligation of the international community is defined by the rules-based order. Criminals must be brought to justice.

No single use of chemical weapons can be left unanswered since it not only undermines the basic sense of justice, but also leads to the erosion of the non-proliferation and disarmament regimes and, in consequence, threatens the security of us all. Brutal attacks, directed mostly against civilians, all have the same aim — to intimidate the international community. The community of the United Nations cannot accept such methods. Our inaction will only encourage perpetrators. I hope that the finalization of the new European Union sanctions mechanism, completed in the framework of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, will allow us to bring appropriate pressure to bear on current and future perpetrators, as well as deter them from those unacceptable actions.

We had all hoped to have chemical weapons effectively banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention. We must stand firmly behind our own rules and norms, which are the pillars of the international order. In that context, let me mention that, as in previous years, Poland will introduce to the General Assembly a draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. It is of great importance to preserve the integrity of this regime. Therefore, we call on all Member States to ensure a strong, clear and united message of support of the whole international community for the integrity of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the efforts of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The second issue I would like to highlight is the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Permit me to make three points regarding this matter.

First, we all know that nuclear weapons cannot be bought on the free market. Therefore, every act of proliferation of these weapons is a failure of both the international community and the rules-based world order. And we must remember that it always involves not only the State that develops a nuclear capacity, but also those who provide it with the means to achieve it, namely, technology, materials and resources.

It is of the utmost importance for every agreement that aims to control nuclear programmes to guarantee that such programmes are used solely for peaceful purposes. We have an obligation to evaluate such agreements against their stated purposes and to act accordingly. We should not turn a blind eye to those who contravene the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by providing the

means or assisting in other ways to develop nuclear weapon capacities.

Good and effective export control mechanisms should be upheld by all countries involved in nuclear, chemical and biological trade for peaceful purposes in order to maintain the appropriate control level of dual-use goods and to make non-proliferation efforts more effective. In that regard, we welcome the International Atomic Energy Agency's efforts to strictly monitor and verify Iran's commitments. Let me also take this opportunity to commend the vital role the Agency plays in non-proliferation. The Agency's system of safeguards is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT.

Secondly, I would like to welcome the prospect of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We have seen some encouraging developments, such as the inter-Korean summits and the meeting of Kim Jong Un with President Donald Trump. This led to the stopping of the missile and nuclear tests. I would like to stress, Mr. President, that this is, in great measure, your and President Moon's great achievement and merit, for which I thank you. However, decisive steps have yet to be taken. Lasting peace will not be achieved without the denuclearization of North Korea in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. Until then, the international community must remain united in maintaining real and consistent pressure on North Korea, including by upholding the United Nations sanctions regime.

Thirdly, for the sake of the credibility of the international community, it is vital to stand firmly behind the duties and obligations we have taken upon our shoulders. In that context, I am saddened by the concerning developments in the security situation in our region of Central and Eastern Europe.

In just the past few years, we have witnessed a clear breach of the Budapest Memorandum that guaranteed the territorial integrity of Ukraine in exchange for its peaceful and voluntary denuclearization. We have also heard about the use of nuclear weapons to end conventional conflicts. Equally alarming was the deployment of a dual-capable means of delivery close to our borders. All these actions have significantly contributed to the deterioration of the security environment.

What should our response to the challenges I have just listed be? It requires, first, the full and firm implementation of the well-established and widely recognized treaties and norms of international law; secondly, support for and full confidence in the work of the international mechanisms responsible for preventing the use of weapons of mass destruction; finally, proactive and constructive engagement in initiatives that aim at fighting proliferation efforts and promoting transparency and verification.

In 2018, my country assumed the chairmanship of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and chaired the seventeenth annual Regular Meeting of the Subscribing States to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Our efforts have been focused on strengthening these regimes, their universalization, securing their widespread and credible verification mechanisms, implementing good practices, and tightening international cooperation. These actions constitute long-term objectives of the Polish security policy.

In conclusion, let me stress once again that non-proliferation is a collective effort. To uphold the security architecture that we have built for decades and to prevent the nightmares of the recurring use of weapons of mass destruction, we need the full commitment of everyone, without any exception, to observing all norms and obligations in this field.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, to take the floor.

President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo (*spoke in Spanish*): It is my pleasure and honour to address the Council for the first time on behalf of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea. We thank the United States of America for convening this debate and congratulate it on its excellent work as President of the Council.

Disarmament is one of the longest-standing objectives of the United Nations. It was the subject of the first Security Council resolution (resolution 1 (1946)), adopted on 25 January 1946, under Article 47 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Council adopted that resolution 72 years ago, and to this day the world is still in the midst of an arms race that leads many States to feel obliged to equip themselves with all types of weapons for their defence, including weapons of

mass destruction. Moreover, such nuclear arsenals not only aggravate tensions between States and undermine efforts for peace, but also threaten the very existence of humankind. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea neither possesses nor intends to possess weapons of mass destruction; it has adopted measures to guarantee the strict implementation of the commitments and obligations undertaken with the international community in the area of non-proliferation by acceding to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

The promotion of nuclear disarmament must be a priority on the agenda of the international community. Two years from now, we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which entered into force in 1970. That international instrument made it possible to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to countries that did not then possess them, but it was not as successful in eliminating those weapons from the nuclear arsenals of nuclear-armed States, which have always strongly resisted implementing their nuclear disarmament commitments. The expenses incurred by the nuclear Powers to maintain and, in some cases, modernize their arsenals exceed the combined budget of all the countries of the African Union and some other regions.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security and commits the Council to its role of working to prevent the production and spread of such weapons. To counter the proliferation and use of weapons of mass destruction, it is essential to implement and comply with international non-proliferation treaties and resolution 1540 (2004); to support the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism; to prohibit all nuclear weapons testing; to share information among States and international organizations; and to implement joint control systems for the verification, inspection and monitoring of nuclear arsenals and research plants by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which should also include their security and destruction. In addition, negotiations with nuclear-weapon States should be encouraged to effectively reject the nuclear weapons option. At the same time, their security should be guaranteed and the right of all parties to the peaceful use of nuclear energy recognized.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea is highly alarmed because of the paradox that what the United Nations says and what each country actually does within its sovereign prerogative takes place in a context of lies, deceptions, hypocrisy and a lack of solidarity. Just two days ago we devoted a special summit to the honour the thinking of the South African leader Nelson Mandela, in which we all agreed to reject any kind of confrontation and resentment and that, thanks to his legacy, a world of peace, security, development and well-being for all could be achieved. Nevertheless, many States appear to choose to wage an arms race that runs counter to the noble ideals of the Mandela summit, which all of us accepted and applauded.

Weapons of mass destruction can be banned and their use made unthinkable. All that is required is the necessary will on all sides. The Republic of Equatorial Guinea expresses its firm support for pursuing efforts towards the negotiation and adoption of binding legal instruments leading to effective, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament with a view to achieving the goal of the complete elimination of all nuclear weapons. The international community of nations should also be deeply concerned about the humanitarian consequences and global effects of any nuclear detonation, be it accidental or intentional, and must cooperate at the international security level to prevent non-State actors from acquiring the means to engage in nuclear terrorism.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea is committed to the use of nuclear energy only for peaceful purposes and under the supervision of the IAEA.

I shall conclude by pointing out that in our region of Africa there are no weapons of mass destruction, nor have they ever been used, which, for us, indicates that weapons of mass destruction are the result of the illegal trafficking of weapons, terrorism and the conflicts on our continent. That is why there is a need to support the African Union in its desire and initiative to obtain funding for peace missions led by Africa on a case-by-case basis. I strongly appeal to the members of the Security Council to ensure that this support materializes, since it will ultimately contribute to international peace and security, which is the main objective of the Security Council.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, to take the floor

President Morales Ayma (*spoke in Spanish*): The presidency of the Security Council has called on its members to discuss the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Bolivia is located in a region that has been declared nuclear-weapon-free for more than half a century. For that reason, I recall article I of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons:

> "Each ... State Party undertakes not to transfer to any recipient whatsoever ... and not in any way to assist, encourage, or induce any non-nuclear-weapon State to manufacture or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices".

I call on all States represented around this table to sign, ratify and give immediate effect to these provisions. That is the best way to avoid the catastrophic possibility of the use of such weapons. It is an ethical imperative and a debt to future generations.

The States Members of the United Nations system are obliged to comply with the essential tenets of the Charter of the United Nations, adopted in 1945, and above all to resolve their international disputes through the use of mechanisms of peaceful settlement. In no dispute may they use weapons of any kind. Rather, it is negotiation, diplomacy, dialogue and judicial settlement that must guide the actions of the countries. Bolivia is convinced that only through these means will we achieve more just societies with shared responsibilities.

We must be capable of leaving the primitive use of weapons among peoples in the past. I must highlight as an example the contribution of the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations system, in the effective resolution of disputes between States in different latitudes and different situations. We are convinced that it is essential to discuss not only the effects, but above all the structural causes of armed conflicts and the real motivations for breaches of international peace, security and justice.

One example of that is Iran, a country that has already been referred to this morning. In 1953, the United States financed, organized and executed a coup d'état against a democratically elected Government that, in exercise of its sovereignty, nationalized its oil from the hands of an Anglo-American company. Then, for several decades, it supported an authoritarian Government that allowed oil profits to benefit transnational corporations.

That was the situation until the 1979 revolution. Now that Iran has regained control of its resources, it is once again a victim of a United States siege. Bolivia categorically rejects the unilateral actions undertaken by the United States Government against Iran. It also condemns the fact that the United States has withdrawn from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, using excuses to pursue its policy of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of that sister country.

I would also point to the region of the Middle East, rich in natural resources but disproportionately affected by invasions, wars and situations of unjustified aggression that continue to produce pain and mourning among its peoples. That region has been the scene of the three greatest aggressions committed in the twenty-first century. The first was the illegal invasion of Iraq, based on the lie that the country possessed weapons of mass destruction. That invasion resulted in more than 1 million deaths. The second aggression was the overthrow of the Libyan Government, with tens of thousands of dead, on the pretext of humanitarian motivations. The serious political instability and humanitarian crisis it unleashed in North Africa are ongoing. The third aggression is the civil war in Syria, which over the past eight years has caused more than half a million deaths. That war is the direct product of interference and the financing of the armed groups and terrorist organizations that are confronting the Syrian Government.

In recent months, the United States has once again demonstrated its contempt for international law, multilateralism and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. Every time the United States invades a country, launches missiles or finances regime-change, it does so together with a propaganda campaign that reiterates that such action is in the name of justice, freedom, democracy, human rights or for humanitarian reasons. I would like to inform the Council that the United States is not interested in democracy, for if that were so it would not have financed coups d'état and supported dictators. It would not threaten democratically elected Governments with military interventions, as it has done with Venezuela. It is not interested in human rights or justice. If so, it would sign and ratify international human rights treaties. It would not threaten the investigative mechanisms of the International Criminal Court. It would not encourage the use of torture or withdraw from the Human Rights Council. It would not separate migrant children from

their families or put them in cages. The United States is not interested in multilateralism. If so, it would not have withdrawn from the Paris Agreement or renounced the global compact on migration. It would not launch unilateral attacks or make unilateral decisions, such as illegally declaring Jerusalem to be the capital of Israel. Such contempt for multilateralism is motivated by its desire for geopolitical control and to appropriate natural resources.

Nonetheless, we commend the countries — France, Germany, the United Kingdom, China and Russia — that stand firm in defence of the nuclear agreement signed with Iran; did not abandon the Paris Agreement; defend the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in internal affairs; respect international law and commitments made and uphold multilateralism. The responsibility of our generation is to bequeath a fairer and safer world to future generations. That will be achieved only if we work together to build a multipolar world, with common rules for respecting and defending the United Nations from all threats.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru, to take the floor.

President Vizcarra Cornejo (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to greet Mr. Donald Trump, as well as all other dignitaries and senior officials present.

Peru welcomes today's high-level meeting to draw the attention of the world and the Security Council to the need to halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as we mark the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Throughout its history, the Council has remained united in the fight against the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, in keeping with its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, as entrusted to it under the Charter of the United Nations.

The work of the Council is based on the gradual development of international instruments, which, in turn, are based on a series of binding instruments adopted by the Organization and its Member States. The most recent of those instruments is the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted in 2017, which we hope all countries, in particular those with nuclear arsenals, will one day be able to join. Indeed, this is not a utopia. Thanks to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, Latin America and the Caribbean is a nuclear-weapon-free region, which has enabled it to make progress in consolidating a region of peace.

As a country committed to non-proliferation regimes, Peru fully complies with the obligations established by the respective instruments, as well as with the provisions of the Council, as stipulated in relevant resolutions. As members of this principal organ, we strongly encourage that they be strictly observed. We believe that ensuring international peace and security means eliminating the risk posed by weapons of mass destruction. There is no better way to do that than to make sure that they do not exist. In that regard, we stress that non-proliferation must go hand in hand with disarmament and strict conventional arms control.

It is our view that that implies, first of all, addressing the challenge posed by the nuclear and ballistic programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In that regard, we again commend the high-level diplomacy that you personally, Mr. President, and your Administration have demonstrated in an effort to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We believe that the continued validity of the nuclear non-proliferation regime should also be observed through the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme, endorsed by the Council in resolution 2231 (2015). Furthermore, we must deplore and condemn the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian conflict, as well as in the British city of Salisbury.

In conclusion, given the complex context, we wish to stress the importance of diplomacy, multilateralism, international law, confidence-building measures and universality in strengthening non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. We note that, in many cases, it is the perception of insecurity that leads to weapons build-up, and even to the development of new means of warfare. We believe that it is necessary to work on that perception in order to halt proliferation and promote disarmament by investing in international cooperation and development. Technology must serve to promote peace and progress, not dehumanization and destruction.

The President: I now give the floor to the Vice-President of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Kablan Duncan (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the

United States presidency of the Security Council for organizing today's high-level debate on the issue of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I would also like to welcome you, Mr. President, as well as the other Heads of State and Government and eminent persons present at today's meeting, to discuss an issue of such great importance for our planet.

The rapid development of nuclear and ballistic programmes has led to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Such weapons fuel violence and conflict, threaten the stability of entire regions and make the issue of non-proliferation an objective that will ensure the survival of humankind. Despite all efforts made by the international community to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, regrettably, our world remains under the constant threat of such weapons and of biological and chemical weapons. At the moment, there are more than 14,500 nuclear weapons in the world. They pose the risk of a nuclear conflict with irreversible humanitarian and environmental consequences and represent a real challenge for the Organization.

It is also regrettable that States are inclined to invest more in the modernization of their nuclear arsenals but very little in the elimination of such weapons and their means of delivery. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, considered to be the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, has been sorely tested and is the source of major discord at its Review Conferences, held every five years. Non-compliance by certain States in upholding their commitments regarding disarmament and non-proliferation constitutes a serious blow to security and could lead to the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors.

The Iranian nuclear problem, the situation in the Middle East — including Syria and allegations of the use of chemical weapons in that country and the use of ballistic missiles in Yemen — and the issue of denuclearization on the Korean peninsula constitute truly complex situations and real sources of concern for the international community. Those situations urgently compel us to place the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at the top of our list of priorities. In facing that situation, the Security Council, as the guarantor of the maintenance of international peace and security, must continue to shoulder its responsibilities in the area of non-proliferation.

In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire calls for the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, as well as the implementation of the various international legal instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation. To that end, my country calls on Member States, supported by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), to meet their international obligations in accordance with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. Accordingly, Côte d'Ivoire, which is party to all major non-proliferation treaties and conventions, has incorporated all obligations under those international legal instruments into its national laws. With regard to disarmament, as the step-by-step approach has not produced the desired results, the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire calls on the nuclear-weapon States to consider a new and more effective approach.

Côte d'Ivoire welcomed the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 7 July 2017 and stresses the importance of its swift implementation. Outer space, rightly considered as a common good for humankind, deserves our sustained attention and requires the urgent adoption of an international and legally binding instrument to protect it from any arms race and thereby avoid its militarization. Moreover, Côte d'Ivoire stresses the need for the international community to adopt a more binding instrument in the area of biological and toxin weapons. Similarly, my country would like to see the adoption a universal and non-discriminatory instrument so as to ensure security for non-nuclear-weapon States. With regard to chemical weapons, Côte d'Ivoire calls for the universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the implementation of resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016). In that regard, the mandate accorded to the OPCW at the special session held at The Hague on 26 and 27 June to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of chemical-weapon attacks could greatly contribute to resolving the issue relating to allegations of the use of chemical weapons. Côte d'Ivoire calls on the Security Council to stand united on that important issue.

Concerning the Iranian nuclear issue, the Ivoiran delegation supports the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which is satisfactory in general. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire calls on stakeholders to settle their differences concerning the agreement, which was the result of unprecedented international compromise and remains to this day a genuine assurance for the implementation of the Treaty

on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and a pledge to ensure peace and regional stability.

Regarding the situation on the Korean peninsula, Côte d'Ivoire welcomes recent positive developments. The historic 12 June meeting in Singapore between you, Mr. President, and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un remains one of the major milestones of the new regional dynamic. In that regard, Côte d'Ivoire reiterates its commitment to the principles of the peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue and consultations. We urge all stakeholders to rule out definitively all military options, which could lead only to damaging and irreversible consequences for the entire planet.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire reaffirms its commitment to multilateralism and international law, and stresses the need for according high priority to the maintenance of the non-proliferation regime on chemical weapons, including their means of delivery, as well as promoting disarmament and arms control.

The President: I now invite The Right Honourable Mrs. Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to take the floor.

Mrs. May (United Kingdom): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important debate. There is no greater threat to international peace and security than the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. These issues matter to every man, woman and child around the globe, and United Kingdom, like the other permanent members of the Security Council, has a special responsibility to protect the significant gains that we have made in the past 70 years — because the international community has invested a huge amount of energy into containing the horrific forces that emerged in the twentieth century. The multilateral framework of treaties to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is one of the greatest achievements of the international community, thereby demonstrating the value of global cooperation. It has improved all of our security. It has brought about a measure of predictability and stability. And it has paved the way to arms control agreements and disarmament.

When many of us around this table were born, it was feared that dozens of nuclear-weapon States might emerge. Instead, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has seen a remarkable near-30 States abandon their pursuit of nuclear weapons. Global stockpiles have been reduced by almost 80 per cent since their Cold war peak. That is true success on a truly global scale. Similar if not greater success has been achieved with regard to chemical and biological weapons. More than 96 per cent of declared stockpiles of chemical weapons have been destroyed under international verification, and no country professes publicly to possess biological weapons. But the past 18 months have seen those hard-won gains challenged. We have seen chemical weapons used in Syria, Malaysia and the United Kingdom. The conventions governing our nuclear compact are being picked at. Predictability and stability are declining. If we do not increase our collective efforts to preserve and build on what we have, there is a very real risk that those gains will subside or fall away.

The 1970 Non-Proliferation Treaty is rightly perceived as the flagship of the international community's determination against nuclear proliferation. Supporting it requires leadership, which your Administration and you personally, Mr. President, are demonstrating with regard to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — the world's most pressing nuclear threat. In meeting Kim Jong Un, you have created a historic opportunity for complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. Consensus from the Council to impose sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea played no small part, but we will not continue meaningful progress towards peace on the Korean peninsula without sustained pressure. Sanctions must be strictly enforced by all, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's neighbours. We must remain vigilant.

Ensuring non-proliferation also requires collective leadership of the type that led to the 2015 agreement of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — the Iran nuclear deal. For many years, the scale and nature of Iran's nuclear programme raised serious international concerns. The JCPOA was an important step forward in addressing them. It remains the best means of preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, and we are committed to preserving the JCPOA, as long as Iran continues to abide by its obligations in full. Iran must ensure that it implements its obligations fully, and, in order to monitor Iran's compliance, we strongly support the International Atomic Energy Agency using inspections and other monitoring provisions of the JCPOA to their full extent.

Other aspects of Iran's policies, in particular its destabilizing regional behaviour and sustained efforts

to enhance its ballistic-missile capability, continue to cause serious concerns. The international community and, where appropriate, the Security Council need to be ready to address that. Iran's proliferation and transfer of missile and sophisticated military technology to groups like Hizbullah in Lebanon or — as the United Nations Panel of Experts concluded — to the Houthis Yemen are also not in compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. It risks a dangerous escalation. We therefore need to see further decisive action in the Council to tackle both the transit and proliferation of those technologies and increase the costs for those responsible. It is regrettable that Russia continues to prevent the Council from upholding its responsibility to stop that destabilizing activity.

Nowhere are the grim consequences of the erosion of global norms on weapons of mass destruction more apparent than in Syria, where the United Nations has concluded that Al-Assad's regime has repeatedly use chemical weapons, a direct assault on a near century-old ban vital to our collective peace and security. Yet Russia has repeatedly wielded its veto to prevent the Security Council from holding the Al-Assad regime to account, even shutting down the international body established to investigate the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

I therefore welcome the decision of 150 countries in June, the largest gathering in its history, to empower the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to attribute responsibility for chemical-weapon attacks in Syria and to put in place arrangements for attribution for any country that requests it. I would like to thank President Trump and President Macron for their shared determination, with the United Kingdom, to deter the use of chemical weapons in Syria through the joint military action in April by the United States, United Kingdom and France. Those actions sent a clear message to the Al-Assad regime, that is, that perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons cannot escape identification or act with impunity. The regime's backers must use their influence to ensure chemical weapons are not used again — for there must be no doubt that we will respond swiftly and appropriately if they are.

The United Kingdom saw the consequences of those norms being eroded in Salisbury this year when Russia recklessly deployed a nerve agent on the streets. The United Kingdom has presented detailed evidence, clearly laid out in charges of attempted murder and the use and possession of a chemical weapon against two agents of the Russian State. We have taken appropriate action with our allies, and we will continue to take the necessary steps to ensure our collective security. Russia has sought only to obfuscate through desperate fabrication. Permanent Members of the Security Council must not attack and undermine the international non-proliferation regimes and the institutions that underpin them. All members of the council must fulfil their responsibilities to safeguard them in support of international peace and security. It is my sincere hope that Russia will rejoin the international consensus against the use of chemical weapons and the collective efforts to uphold it. If so, the Council will again be able to work together to rid the world of chemical weapons, but if not, we should leave no one in any doubt of the international community's determination to uphold international non-proliferation regimes.

Not all the challenges faced by the counter-proliferation framework come before the Council, but they are no less urgent. We need to strengthen the rules to keep pace with new technologies and more complex global supply chains. We must hold every United Nations Member to develop its capabilities and regulations and ensure they are able to make their contribution to that global effort. The quiet, but essential, role the United Nations plays must be at the heart of those efforts. As United Nations Members, therefore, we should invest the expertise and necessary diplomatic resources in the conventions.

It was collective engagement by States across the globe that produced the counter-proliferation framework. Even the most powerful recognized that investing in collective rules-based restraint was the only effective way of addressing national security interests and avoiding unilateral recourse to force. We cannot let that framework be undermined today by those who reject the values and disregard the rules that have kept us safe. It will take collective engagement to reinforce it in the face of today's challenges. And in that, as always been the case, the United Kingdom will play a leading role.

The President: I now give the floor to the Prime Minister of the Netherlands.

Mr. Rutte (Netherlands): There have been several occasions this year when weapons of mass destruction have endangered our security, undermined international stability and caused terrible suffering. The year 2018 has made the importance of non-proliferation

abundantly clear. I agree with you, Mr. President, that, as politicians, we are first and foremost responsible for keeping our own citizens safe, and I believe that multilateral institutions play a major role where the issue is concerned.

As I will say in my address to the General Assembly later today, the Kingdom of the Netherlands has always championed and will continue to champion the rules-based international order and multilateral cooperation, especially homeland security matters and other issues of shared concern. Multilateral cooperation requires active support from all of us, including and even especially on the issue of weapons of mass destruction. We should acknowledge the significant achievements that have been made in controlling those weapons.

For 50 years, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has kept the number of nuclear weapon possessors under 10. We can only imagine how much conflict, instability and violence that has prevented. I am encouraged that United States, Russian and British Foreign Ministers have underlined their continuing support for, and commitment to, the NPT on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary.

We have seen some positive steps on non-proliferation this year in relation to North Korea. The ultimate goal of our joint efforts is to ensure that North Korea abandons its nuclear ballistic missile capabilities and its programmes on weapons of mass destruction. It should do that in a comprehensive, verifiable and irreversible manner. We welcome the efforts you, Mr. President, are personally making to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free Korean peninsula. For we know that the problem can only be resolved peacefully. As Chair of the sanctions committee, the Netherlands is doing everything it can to ensure that all nations fully implement the sanctions so as to keep up the pressure on North Korea to comply with its international obligations.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands believes that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, endorsed by Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), remains a good example of how the Council and the international community can work hand in hand for non-proliferation. The International Atomic Energy Agency has concluded, in 12 consecutive reports, that Iran is abiding by its commitments under the deal. As long as that continues, we will also uphold our commitment to the deal. At the same time, we are concerned about Iran's role in the region — its ballistic missile programme and human rights record. In particular, Iran's support for Hizbullah, the role Iran plays in Syria and Iraq and in the development of missiles by the Houthis in Yemen remain serious concerns for the Netherlands that need to be addressed.

The repeated use of chemical weapons is deeply alarming. It causes terrible human suffering and erodes the established international norm. There should be no impunity for any use of chemical weapons — not for the large-scale attacks in Syria or for the individual attacks in Malaysia and the United Kingdom. The same goes for the possible use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime in Idlib.

All of us, both within and outside the Council, bear a responsibility, because of the stalemate in this organ, we have tasked the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to investigate and identify those responsible for the use of those weapons. We cannot sit back, we have to speak up, take action and firmly support the OPCW so that the perpetrators can be brought to justice, and we need to do it together. Indecisiveness by countries that claim to support the principles of disarmament and non-proliferation could ultimately have disastrous consequences. And with regard to the Salisbury attack, we reaffirm our confidence in the United Kingdom's investigations. We welcome it bringing criminal charges as an important step towards justice, which bolsters our earlier conclusion that it is essential to hold those responsible to account.

In conclusion, the devastating consequences of the use of weapons of mass destruction serve to underline the urgent need to take action. The use of those weapons must never become the new normal. We must prevent impunity at all costs. A legal norm can be effective only if we collectively uphold it together as part of a multilateral effort.

The President: I now give the floor to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait.

Sheikh Al Sabah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express our satisfaction and pleasure at seeing His Excellency President Trump preside over this meeting of the Security Council. We appreciate your initiative in convening this open meeting, which confirms that you attach the utmost priority to one of the most serious threats to

international peace and security, namely, weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

The discussion we are having in this Chamber comes at a delicate stage amidst complex circumstances facing our world today. That is especially so in the Middle East region. In addition to the spread of conflicts and terrorism, we are facing more threats embodied in the use of WMDs. Those are not virtual threats any longer, because we have recently witnessed the launch of ballistic missiles, the testing of nuclear weapons and the use of chemical weapons in many places around the world.

In that regard, I would like to reiterate the constant and principled position of the State of Kuwait on non-proliferation. We condemn the use of all WMDs anywhere, at any time and by any party. The use of WMDs is a grave violation of international law. Achieving peace, security and stability in the world cannot be reached while such weapons exist.

We have recently witnessed the horrors of chemical-weapon attacks undertaken by State and non-State actors in Syria. Such attacks confirm that the threat of proliferation of WMDs has not declined, despite numerous treaties and resolutions criminalizing their use. We are following with great concern the possibility once again of such attacks in future, whether in Syria or elsewhere in the world. We emphasize the importance of addressing chemical attacks through the unity of the Security Council in responding to the imminent danger posed by WMDs, thereby ensuring the implementation of the relevant international resolutions, particularly resolution 1540 (2004).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is facing unprecedented attacks from ballistic missiles launched by the Houthi militias towards its territories and targeting civilian and religious sites. The State of Kuwait reiterates its strong condemnation and denunciation of the rocket attacks targeting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in particular, and the region in general. We also emphasize the need for the Security Council to take action and shoulder its responsibilities in confronting the threat facing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in order to preserve international peace and security. My country's delegation is fully prepared to take further measures in order to put an end to such attacks, which are undoubtedly linked to the proliferation of WMDs.

In the midst of the events the Middle East region is witnessing, the State of Kuwait remains committed to supporting all United Nations resolutions, and we have welcomed the adoption of resolution 2231 (2015). While the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to implement the provisions of that resolution and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) publishes reports confirming Iran's compliance with its nuclear-related obligations, we note with concern the independent international reports that indicate that Iran continues to support and finance militias and armed groups in Arab countries.

We are particularly concerned about Iran's interference in Yemen and, as the resolution adopted by the League of Arab States on 11 September confirms, Yemeni territories have been transformed into a launching pad for Iranian-made ballistic missiles targeting Yemen's neighbors and threatening maritime navigation in the Bab Al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea, which not only negatively impacts the security and stability of Yemen and the region but also constitutes a violation of resolution 2216 (2015). The League of Arab States resolution also calls on Iran to cease those acts and all such acts that adversely affect the security and best interests of the States in the region, and to undertake confidence-building measures with its neighbors in order to establish ties based on a good neighbour policy, cooperation, mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

As I give my speech from this forum, I consider it a great honor to speak as a representative of the Arab States in the Security Council, conveying the concerns and preoccupations of our peace-loving peoples and their aspirations to security and stability. In that context, the State of Kuwait and all other Arab States reaffirm their absolute faith in multilateral action under the umbrella of the United Nations, according to the objectives, principles and commitments agreed upon in the Charter of the United Nations. We also emphasize the Arab position on the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was extended indefinitely after the decision of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, and establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in the Middle East.

We reiterate the Arab position calling upon the three sponsor States of the 1995 Middle East resolution to shoulder their responsibilities by implementing the resolution, as it was an integral part of the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We also emphasize the need for Israel to accede to the

Non-Proliferation Treaty and to place all its nuclear facilities under the supervision and monitoring of the IAEA, especially as it is the only country in the Middle East that has not yet acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In conclusion, the commitment you have shown, Mr. President, to confront the challenges posed by WMDs is not limited to our meeting here today; it is also to be seen in the current diplomatic efforts to ease tension and achieve denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Those efforts came within the context of cohesion and unity on the part of Security Council members to counter the illegal programmes and activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We know that the road ahead is still long and hard to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, yet we believe that the absolute and sincere commitment of all the parties concerned, as well as the full implementation of all the relevant Security Council resolutions, will lead to a lasting and comprehensive peace agreement in a Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China.

Mr. Wang Yi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Maintaining global peace and security is the primary responsibility of the Security Council, as entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations, as well as a shared responsibility of all Security Council members. Given the complex challenges to international peace and security, how should the Security Council fulfil that mission and play its role? That is a question that deserves serious consideration. China believes the following.

The Security Council should perform its functions in a fair and just manner, as mandated by the Charter. The Council must uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter, universally recognized international law and the norms governing international relations. It should safeguard the authority and the role of the United Nations in international affairs, as well as the sovereignty, independence and legitimate rights and interests of all countries. The Security Council should adhere to political settlement as the basic direction. The Security Council should also be the strongest advocate for political solutions, resolving differences and disputes through dialogue and consultation. It should make effective use of all the tools at its disposal, including good offices, mediation and peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, and step up its preventive diplomacy efforts with the aim of serving the greater goal of achieving political settlements.

The Security Council should enhance its unity in order to promote consensus. All of its members must keep firmly in mind their responsibility for maintaining world peace and security. They should improve their unity and coordination, set aside individual geopolitical considerations, ensure that the Council can function effectively and uphold the common interests of all the States Members of the United Nations. The Council should strengthen its overall planning and coordination with a view to forging synergies, coordinating and cooperating with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General and the United Nations development system so that the political and development pillars can support each other and so that efforts aimed at achieving lasting peace and sustainable development can be mutually reinforcing.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their means of delivery poses a real threat to global peace and security and is a challenge that we all face. China proposes that we intensify our efforts in three areas. First, we must champion the rule of law in order to consolidate and improve the international non-proliferation regime. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and other relevant Council resolutions together constitute the legal foundation of the international non-proliferation regime. We must all work diligently to safeguard its universality, effectiveness and authority, particularly by preventing terrorists and other non-State actors from acquiring WMD materials and technologies.

Secondly, we must take multi-pronged measures to implement the NPT in a balanced way. Every country should keep its word, fulfil its responsibilities and abide by its international obligations. The NPT and related agreements must be fully and comprehensively implemented in their entirety. Double standards, discriminatory arrangements and selective enforcement are impermissible.

Thirdly, we should improve international cooperation and enhance every country's non-proliferation capabilities. It is Governments that

bear the primary responsibility for non-proliferation, and countries should be supported in their efforts to develop their non-proliferation policies based on their national circumstances and encouraged to improve their non-proliferation and law-enforcement capacity-building, and conduct more exchanges and practical cooperation efforts so that together we can strengthen the weakest links and achieve general security.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear issue represents a hard-won achievement for multilateralism that reinforces the international nuclear-non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East generally. While no international agreement is perfect, the JCPOA has had the unanimous endorsement of the Security Council. The events of the past three years have shown that it is a viable agreement, and China encourages Iran to continue to fulfil all of its commitments. At the same time, the legitimate right of all countries to conduct normal economic relations and trade with Iran should be respected. China calls on the relevant parties to keep the big picture in mind, think long-term and uphold the sanctity, integrity and efficacy of the JCPOA.

Since the beginning of the year, there has been major progress with the situation on the Korean peninsula. China has been working relentlessly to that end, and we support the important understandings reached between the leaders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States at the Singapore summit. We also support the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea to improve their relations. We call on all the parties to take advantage of the current opportunities to translate this political consensus into concrete action, and to work on establishing a peace mechanism and, ultimately, denuclearization on the Korean peninsula, with a view to achieving a lasting peace there as soon as possible.

China lives by its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to upholding the current international system centred on the United Nations. We have worked diligently to fulfil our international responsibilities and obligations. We must continue to work together to realize peace and security for all.

In conclusion, I want to point out that China has never wavered in respecting the principle of non-interference in other countries' domestic affairs. It is a tradition of Chinese foreign policy, and our observance of it has been commended by the international community. We have never interfered, and never will interfere, in any country's domestic affairs. We reject any unwarranted accusations to that effect and call on others to abide by the purposes of the Charter and to refrain from interfering in other countries' internal affairs.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In the modern world, the ability to effectively combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is particularly crucial to the maintenance of global and regional stability and to reliably ensuring the security of every State, without exception. Constructive cooperation in this area is an important element of our efforts to establish a positive international agenda.

I think we all agree that the Security Council resolutions that set out concrete measures for dealing with those who violate non-proliferation regimes should be strictly observed. The cornerstone remains the founding resolution 1540 (2004), which requires Member States to commit to taking concrete measures to prevent weapons of mass destruction and their components from falling into the hands of non-State actors. The Council's resolutions, providing for sanctions for the transfer of any type of arms to terrorists, are especially important. Such transfers do happen and must be thoroughly investigated.

Just as it was 50 years ago, when the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) opened for signature, my country remains committed to the goal of ridding the world of the nuclear threat. At the same time, there can be no question that we have to consider every factor influencing strategic stability, and that every country with military and nuclear potential should take part in the negotiation process. The desire of a number of countries to ban nuclear weapons in isolation from the fundamental principles of the NPT has no hope of success and serves only to create ambiguity with regard to future approaches to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Speaking of the NPT, I should not omit to mention resolution 2231 (2015), in which the Council endorsed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to settle the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme. The unilateral withdrawal of the United States from this agreement represents a serious threat to the non-proliferation regime, particularly since, as many

speakers before me have emphasized, Tehran has been meticulously abiding by its obligations under the JCPOA, as the International Atomic Energy Agency has regularly confirmed. Russia is a firm believer in the importance of preserving the JCPOA, and we are actively working on that at the moment with Iran, China and the European Union. Without it, we could be facing increasing tensions throughout the Middle East, fraught with risks to regional stability and the non-proliferation regime. The collapse of the JCPOA would also be extremely counterproductive for the ongoing efforts to denuclearize the Korean peninsula, which we welcome and support.

There continue to be other serious obstacles to nuclear non-proliferation — essentially, the decision of the United States to put off for an unspecified period, perhaps forever, its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the lack of progress in implementing the decision of the States parties to the NPT on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

The situation regarding chemical-weapon disarmament is also worrying, primarily in connection with the actions of a number of Western States, which have continued again and again to accuse the Syrian authorities of the use of banned chemical agents. We should warn them against carrying out any new attacks on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic under any more staged pretexts, which would constitute a gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations and undermine the efforts to promote a political settlement in that long-suffering country. The Government of Syria has destroyed its arsenal of chemical weapons in accordance with the Russian-American agreement of 2013, enshrined in Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and in the resolutions of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. But there are terrorist groups that do possess chemical warfare materials. They have learned how to synthesize them and have built their own laboratories for that. Intelligence services, including those of the United States, have been issuing warnings about this for a long time. Russia has repeatedly proposed developing a comprehensive strategy for combating chemical terrorism. In 2017 Russian and China introduced a draft resolution on the subject to the Security Council that was not considered, through no fault of ours. From a broader perspective, as long ago as March 2016, at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, we submitted a draft convention at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva on combating acts of chemical and biological terrorism. Sadly, work on it has been artificially blocked, and no doubt we all know by which countries. Nevertheless, our proposals still stand.

Meanwhile, the situation is deteriorating in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, where our Western colleagues are trying to impose so-called attributive functions on its Technical Secretariat, in a gross violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention that infringes on the prerogatives of the Security Council.

At the same time, entirely unsubstantiated rhetoric, in the "highly likely" vein, is increasing in connection with the Salisbury affair. However, Britain has been stubbornly rejecting our repeated proposals for a joint investigation, despite the fact that this is a requirement according to its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, the 1965 bilateral Consular Convention and the 1959 European Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters. This raises the possibility that if they do not want to cooperate, they have something to hide. We once again call on London to launch a constructive dialogue in order to establish the truth.

The way events have been developing gives reason to believe that today no possibility can be excluded, including that of provocations involving the use of biological weapons. Given the attempts I have mentioned to manipulate the status of the Chemical Weapons Convention, I want to caution against the temptation to do the same with the Biological Weapons Convention. I would like to point out that the Convention stipulates that the right to initiate and conduct investigations belongs to the Security Council alone. There is no provision for surrogates, nor can there be. Incidentally, I would like to remind the Council that we more than once proposed to agree on a mechanism for verifying the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. However, that was firmly blocked and ultimately completely buried by the United States. Washington's desire to preserve a free hand has also been apparent when the Convention's regime has encountered additional issues with regard to the spread of military medical and biological activity, including in the post-Soviet space. We urge everyone to reject the militarization of health care. Russia has consistently advocated for strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention, and we are implementing several

initiatives to that end, including the establishment of mobile anti-epidemic teams for rapid responses to biological emergencies.

A dialogue between Russia and the United States, as the two largest nuclear Powers, is especially important for strengthening the non-proliferation regime for weapons of mass destruction. Our two States were present at the creation of the common frameworks for multilateral cooperation in preventing such weapons from falling into the hands of non-State actors and combating acts of nuclear terrorism. Russia still considers such cooperation to be fundamentally important, not just for Moscow and Washington but for the entire international community. Let us not sacrifice it for the sake of instant decisions and short-term calculations. Based on the solid foundation of the Charter of the United Nations, Russia is always open to honest cooperation with the five major nuclear-weapon States and all other countries in the interests of strengthening global strategic stability. We hope that today's meeting of the Security Council — the key organ for the maintenance of international peace and security — will enable us to take a step in that direction. In that regard, we believe that President Trump's initiative to convene this meeting is very timely.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia.

Mr. Negewo (Ethiopia): We thank the United States presidency for convening today's high-level briefing on non-proliferation. We are very pleased to see you presiding over this important meeting, Mr. President. Non-proliferation has indeed been high on the Council's agenda and it is therefore timely and relevant that we are discussing the issue at the highest level.

A few days ago, the world paid tribute to the late Kofi Annan. In a speech he gave in 2006 he said,

> "Can there be any threat more alarming, in today's world, than that of a nuclear or biological weapon falling into the hands of terrorists, or being used by a State as a result of some terrible misunderstanding or miscalculation? The more States have such weapons, the greater the risk. And the more those States that already have them increase their arsenals, or insist that such weapons are essential to their national security, the more other States feel that they too must have them, for their security."

This is indeed the reality that we are facing today. Indeed, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is posing grave threats to global peace and security. From the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iranian nuclear issues to chemical attacks in Syria and the Salisbury incident in the United Kingdom, proliferation risks have become one of the most serious challenges of our time. The international non-proliferation regime is under serious strain and global anxieties about nuclear weapons are at the highest level since the end of the Cold War, as Secretary-General António Guterres said.

We believe it is absolutely vital that we comprehensively address the risks of proliferation. We have no option but to strive to find negotiated solutions through political and diplomatic means to some of the most difficult issues that we are currently facing. We have all been observing the developments following the recent summit meeting between you, Mr. President, and Mr. Kim Jong Un, the outcome of which has given us some sense of hope for progress towards the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the advancement of peace in North-East Asia. We encourage such endeavours, as we have first-hand experience in resolving and bringing peace through diplomatic means to the no-war, no-peace situation that existed for 20 years between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

We earnestly hope that you will maintain the momentum generated recently with a view to finding a comprehensive, peaceful, diplomatic and political solution to the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Council should continue to support such endeavours. In that regard, the talk of a follow-up summit is indeed encouraging. We also welcome the outcome of the third inter-Korean summit in Pyongyang and hope it will lay a foundation for concrete action towards sustainable peace, security and complete and verifiable denuclearization on the Korean peninsula, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Council should support the relevant parties in making progress in that direction. In the meantime, we believe that the continued implementation of the sanctions regime will be critical.

With regard to the Iranian nuclear issue, we remain convinced that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) represents a significant achievement for multilateralism. However, we understand the challenges and difficulties inherent in the broader implementation of resolution 2231 (2015). While we recognize that

the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA represents a serious challenge, the commitment of the remaining participating countries will be critical to its full implementation. We hope they will continue to make every possible effort to address the major challenges and to contribute to the full implementation of the agreement, which remains vital to the global non-proliferation architecture.

In addressing the proliferation risk posed by non-State actors, we believe that the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) continues to play a significant role. Strengthening the Committee's assistance framework for Member States aimed at addressing gaps in implementation continues to be important in comprehensively addressing the proliferation risk posed by non-State actors, including terrorists. The Council should also pay particular attention to strengthening the collaboration between the Group of Experts of the 1540 Committee and members of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities.

Finally, multilateral agreements such as the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons continue to make an immense contribution to the prevention and elimination of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. At a time of great risks of proliferation, it is in all of our best interests to preserve those important multilateral agreements in order to guarantee our collective safety and security and ensure their full and effective implementation.

I would therefore like to conclude by reaffirming Ethiopia's unwavering commitment to continuing to fulfil its international obligations by taking all the necessary measures to prevent weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery from falling into the hands of State and non-State actors, including terrorists, as well as by fully implementing the relevant Security Council resolutions in that regard.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): We are grateful to the United States presidency for organizing today's summit meeting of world leaders focused on countering the spread and use of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Given that previous speakers have mentioned the devastating consequences of the use and testing of weapons of mass destruction, I want the Council and the world to understand that Kazakhstan, along with some other nations and vast territories, has been suffering those consequences since the early days of the Cold War.

The goal of today's meeting is very close to Kazakhstan's heart and is one of the key priorities of my country's foreign policy. Kazakhstan's firm and unwavering commitment to international peace and security began at our independence in 1991. Our Head of State, President Nursultan Nazarbayev, took the daring and bold decision to renounce our nuclear arsenal and close the Semipalatinsk nuclear-weapon test site, the world's fourth and second largest, respectively. The international community acknowledged the unprecedented and laudable nature of those actions by establishing 29 August, the date of the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site, as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. In September, the United Nations community commemorated that Day in a new, official high-level format, in which the international community reiterated its plea for more effective steps to rebuild trust between nuclear and non-nuclear countries.

Earlier this year, in January, the signature event of Kazakhstan's presidency of the Security Council was devoted to the importance of confidence-building measures in achieving the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (see S/PV.8160). Confidence-building measures succeeded in stopping the arms race and preventing a nuclear catastrophe in the past century. Today, the world is hoping for a repeat of the same visionary actions from the nuclear Powers, something that is unfortunately not being fully realized or acknowledged at today's meeting.

At the Security Council meeting in January, as well as in his manifesto "The World. The Twenty-First Century", President Nazarbayev noted that the largest nuclear Powers should be in the vanguard in advocating for a nuclear-weapon-free world and should lead by example in reducing their weapons of mass destruction. Past conflicts have shown that we cannot ensure our own security by undermining the security of others. President Nazarbayev has therefore urged all of us to understand that only complete elimination of all nuclear weapons and full disarmament can be an absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. He has therefore called on all States Members of the United Nations to build a nuclear-weapon-free

world by 2045, the centenary of the founding of the United Nations.

We have seen some good examples of confidence-building measures in the case of the inter-Korean rapprochement and the Singapore summit, due in part to the successful personal efforts of President Trump, which have the potential to inspire other positive outcomes of goodwill and sincere collaboration. Kazakhstan fully supports such promising beginnings and is ready to share its practical experience and expertise, if necessary, based on our sad legacy, as I have mentioned. However, trust alone cannot guarantee sustained success unless it is supported by the strict implementation of all existing regulatory legal instruments and the Security Council's sanctions resolutions. Without diminishing the role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), it is clear that the world needs a stronger international legal framework against WMDs. The current asymmetric implementation of the Treaty is an obstacle to trust between nuclear and non-nuclear countries. Nevertheless, the NPT should not lose its effectiveness and relevance amid such scepticism.

The early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty should also become one of the most important and essential building blocks for the global non-proliferation architecture. When fully operational, it will definitely help to foster mutual trust and confidence. Kazakhstan cooperates actively with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and annually conducts high-level international events aimed at implementing effective practical steps to achieve a world without nuclear threats, as a natural outcome of our commitments. To realize that goal, we must first and foremost establish a final ban on nuclear testing. Secondly, Atoms for Peace should remain our important moral compass. However, in the meantime, we should not cease our struggle to achieve a legal ban on nuclear weapons, keeping in mind our paramount goal of attaining a nuclear-weapon-free world.

By opening the International Atomic Energy Agency Low-Enriched Uranium Bank last year, Kazakhstan made another contribution towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime and ensuring the safe and reliable use of uranium for peaceful purposes. We are grateful to all donors — the United States, the European Union, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Norway and the Nuclear Threat Initiative — whose generous financial contributions made the project possible. We also thank China and Russia for their cooperation regarding the transit through their territories of low-enriched uranium and equipment for the Bank.

How can we enforce non-proliferation and disarmament through the measures of the Security Council? First, the Council must maintain its unity and common understanding in order to send the world a clear and unambiguous message about our strong stance on those issues. It is vital to ensure that everyone realizes that sanctions are interim measures and not an end in themselves. Their effectiveness should be measured by the degree of progress towards reaching political solutions peacefully.My President has also suggested that withdrawing from the NPT should be made extremely difficult, possibly by crafting a special Security Council resolution with serious implications for countries in breach of the Treaty. He has also proposed developing a legally binding system of guarantees to be given by nuclear Powers to States willing to voluntarily renounce their nuclear weapons, as well as those with non-nuclear status, as an incentive for the latter not to acquire such weapons. That is a fair step that can be undertaken without significant costs.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones continue to be an effective way of combating the spread of nuclear weapons. My President has therefore proposed strengthening the cooperation between nuclear-weapon-free zones by organizing a high-level inter-zone meeting in Astana next year. The permanent five members should encourage the expansion of those zones by providing them with security guarantees. We therefore hope that Central Asia's nuclear-weapon-free zone will be endorsed by the last hold-out among the permanent five.

Given the criticism of the considerably weakened non-proliferation regime in Syria, Kazakhstan is firmly convinced that the Council has to be united in working tirelessly to find a comprehensive solution to the issues of arbitration and prosecution, without transferring such prerogatives to other structures and subjecting them to further polarization and politicization. A political settlement of the Syrian conflict will also help eliminate the vacuum that allows chemical weapons to be used with impunity. For its part, Kazakhstan will continue to provide the Astana platform of ceasefire and confidence-building measures as a complement and support to the Geneva process, under the leadership of the United Nations.

Regarding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), that multilateral document has fulfilled its primary mission by putting Iran on a nuclear-free path, with the IAEA confirming that Iran has fulfilled all its nuclear obligations. Kazakhstan, with its reputation as an honest broker, hosted two sets of talks during the negotiations that led up to the agreement. As the world's top uranium exporter, Kazakhstan contributed significantly by supplying 60 tons of raw uranium to Iran in exchange for Tehran sending over 300 kilograms of highly enriched uranium to Russia. All the parties to the agreement have acknowledged this measure as a significant milestone, with this action constituting the first start of JCPOA implementation. Notwithstanding certain complications related to the obligations of some parties to the agreement, we hope for its further implementation. We propose that new concerns and challenges be considered through all possible means of diplomacy, without destroying our hard-won achievements.

Finally, it is necessary for all in the Council to demonstrate responsibility, political will and wisdom in order to make a quantum leap forward of great historical significance. We need the moral compass to go from narrow national interests to a greater vision of a safe and secure world.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden.

Ms. Wallström (Sweden): Listening to the representatives of all countries around this table, I have heard support for the idea that multilateral and diplomatic efforts are urgently needed to address the challenges of today. International peace and security, and preventing conflict and terrorism, are rightly high on our agenda. I therefore thank you, Madam President, for convening this important meeting on non-proliferation.

We have been asked to comment on four themes in this briefing: sanctions efficiency, capacity to implement, non-State actors, and weapons of mass destruction. I think that the answer to all of issues is close multilateral cooperation. The world would certainly be a much more dangerous place without the existing treaties and agreements of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Yet, that multilateral framework depends on our continuous commitment to collective solutions.

In many parts of the world, we are seeing the modernization of nuclear weapons arsenals, increased missile capacities, the threat of chemical weapons use and a normalization of the rhetoric surrounding all weapons of mass destruction. History has shown us too many times that such steps form a pathway to catastrophe. The nuclear-weapon States bear a particular responsibility in upholding and making good on the commitment inherent in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) of a nuclear weapons-free world. To that end, the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT in 2020 must pave the way for enhanced disarmament and non-proliferation commitments. Equally, Sweden reiterates the call on all States to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The non-proliferation Treaty is the common tool towards disarmament and non-proliferation, but let me today also focus on three specific issues on which many speakers have already touched. These are the challenges to the Iran nuclear agreement, the development of nuclear weapons by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the recurring use of chemical weapons.

First, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — the Iran deal — is a historic achievement. It is a concrete example of effective diplomatic non-proliferation efforts. The agreement prevents nuclear proliferation in Iran, but also aims to avoid ripple effects in the region. As the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirms, Iran continues to fulfil its nuclear obligations under the agreement. As long as that is the case, the JCPOA effectively curtails Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons.

This is why Sweden, together with the rest of the European Union (EU), deeply regrets the United States unilateral withdrawal from the agreement — a decision with far-reaching consequences that makes our world more unsafe. And frankly, what are the alternatives to the agreement? Undercutting a concrete multilateral non-proliferation tool it dangerously undermines our joint non-proliferation efforts elsewhere.

Together with our EU partners, we will try to mitigate the adverse effects of the United States policies. Sweden and the rest of the EU will continue to foster broad relations and dialogue with Iran, including on issues such as human rights. Iran's role in the region and missile activities are clearly a matter of concern. These concerns can and should, however, be addressed

separately and not at the expense of the JCPOA. Security in the Middle East region can be achieved only through diplomatic solutions and enhanced cooperation, not through further polarization and isolation. It should be remembered that we tried that before for decades, with isolation and sanctions, and all it did was to support the most conservative forces in Iran. That is a problem

Secondly, the nuclear weapons programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a major threat to the global non-proliferation regime. Recent diplomatic efforts deserve our full and active support. The continued progress in the inter-Korean dialogue is very encouraging, and the summit between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in Singapore in June was indeed significant. All parties must now work to maintain momentum and take positive steps. For the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, that means that commitments must be translated into legally binding undertakings. The IAEA should be given a role early in the verification of the denuclearization and disarmament process. The Security Council and the international community must continue to stand united.

Thirdly, the use of chemical weapons is a serious violation of international law. Every violation undermines established norms and risks eroding the international taboo on these weapons. This is a very serious and worrisome development. The use of chemical weapons is morally abhorrent and can never be accepted.

In Syria, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism has confirmed that chemical weapons were used repeatedly by the Syrian Arab Republic and by Da'esh. We supported the decision to task the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. While a mechanism established by the Council would have been preferable, the issue was too important to be allowed to be blocked. This does not, however, free the Council from its responsibility to ensure that those responsible are held to account.

In Salisbury, in the United Kingdom, a targeted murder was attempted using a nerve agent. Such assaults are absolutely unacceptable, and we call on Russia to fully cooperate with the investigations.

We must never lose sight of why we are making the efforts to eliminate these horrific weapons. Until now, we have not talked about the victims. I myself have met with survivors of nuclear weapons attacks, and I will never forget their stories. Victims of chemical weapons have shared similarly accounts. It is important to listen to such personal experiences in order to understand what it is we are fighting for. It has definitely strengthened my resolve to step up efforts for non-proliferation and disarmament.

Weapons of mass destruction are clearly a global threat that we must address together. Only through multilateral solutions, including on the part of the Council, can we effectively prevent the use of these repugnant weapons. The multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament framework is also a key pillar of the international rules-based order. We owe this to the survivors and victims of past attacks, and we owe it to future generations.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.